



Universal Supports Assessment and Planning Tool (USAPT)

Building/Classroom-Level Assessment of Effective Practices for Students with ASD

What is the purpose of the USAPT?

The concept behind Universal Supports is derived from the extensive research in the area of school-wide positive behavior support. Universal Supports are system-wide supports and strategies to prevent a majority of problem behaviors in general education settings. Applied to students with ASD, Universal Supports involve the implementation of classroom or building-level evidence-based supports and strategies. These strategies are considered critical for the vast majority of students with ASD, and have been identified as highly effective practices in teaching and supporting students with ASD in integrated environments. In whole, these supports and strategies provide students with ASD a solid foundation for learning and can be individualized to meet the unique needs of each student.

The USAPT is designed to measure two main areas of support within school buildings / programs. The first main area is foundational supports. Foundational supports, processes and relationships are necessary to have established before implementing specific educational supports for students. It is essential for schools to have effective team processes, guiding principles, and a commitment to working with families established before attempting to improve other support systems. If these three systems are not in place, then even the best efforts to improve other areas will yield limited success. The second area of support consists of specific strategies to help students with ASD function independently and develop appropriate social behavior.

| FOUNDATIONAL SUPPORTS, PROCESSES, AND RELATIONSHIPS | STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT INDEPENDENT FUNCTIONING AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT |
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| 1. Guiding Principles | 4. Educational Strategies |
| 2. Team Process | 5. Visual & Organizational Support |
| 3. Parent & Family Support | 6. Functional Communication Systems |
| | 7. Adult Support |
| | 8. Peer to Peer Support |
| | 9. Positive Behavior Support |

Who completes the USAPT?

The USAPT is completed by each person on your building’s ASD support team with the assistance of a coach. The coach should be someone who is familiar with the school building and has worked with the building leadership team. It is important that the coach who facilitates the USAPT assessment is very familiar with the school’s implementation of best practices for students with ASD at the building level.

When should the USAPT be completed?

The USAPT should be completed at least once per school year, preferably at the same time each year.

Procedures for Completing and Scoring the USAPT

Throughout the rating, scoring and planning process, keep in mind that goals for ALL students with ASD are: INDEPENDENT FUNCTIONING and the DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL FUNCTIONING

Step 1 - Coach Scoring

The Coach will use his or her best judgment based on personal experience with the school and the descriptions and exemplars in the *USAPT Scoring Guide* to score each of the 52 items on the *USAPT Scoring Form*. Do not leave any items blank.

Step 2 - Team Member Rating

The coach will give the *USAPT Team Member Rating Form U* to each ASD Support Team member to be completed independently and returned to the coach upon completion. Members should be instructed to rate each of the 52 items according to whether the component is “**In Place (4)**”, “**Mostly in Place (3)**”, “**Partially in Place (2)**”, “**Minimally in Place (1)**”, or “**Not in Place (0)**”.

Step 4- Coach Summarizes Scores

The coach will collect all completed team member rating forms. For each item, the coach will tally the number of 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4 point responses and record the most common score for each item on the *USAPT Scoring Form*.

Step 5 – Team Report

The coach will then complete the *USAPT Team Summary* by recording areas of discrepancy, strength and weakness.

Discrepancies - If there were any items for which the team’s most frequent rating varied from the coaches’ rating based upon the *USAPT Scoring Guide*, the descriptions and exemplars from the guide should be shared with the team. This can happen at a team meeting or informally. If upon sharing areas of discrepancy, the coach realizes that there is new information that according to the *USAPT Scoring Guide* that would result in a different score, the item and the adjusted final score should be recorded on the *USAPT Coach’s Scoring Form*.

Step 6 - Reporting Back to Team

After completing the remainder of the *USAPT Scoring Form*, the coach will report back to the team using the *USAPT Team Summary U*. If needed, address items of discrepancy and adjust the score. The coach will then lead the team through a discussion of the identified areas of strength (high ratings) and weakness (low ratings). This information should be conveyed as “constructive feedback” **to assist with action planning**. Schools scoring low on the Guiding Principles, Team Process and Parent and Family Support areas should prioritize those areas for change.